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# A Neglected Shrine

Souvenir  
of the  
MEMORIAL SERVICE  
held at  
Hodgenville, Ky.

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# A Neglected Shrine

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A slow, chilly ride through a drizzling rain, over a pasty red clay road of three miles from the little village of Hodgenville, Kentucky, brought me to the cradle spot of the greatest American, the sole American who shares with Washington the love and admiration of the civilized world. Washington and Lincoln are the two names that have been lifted above all sectional, party and social prejudices. They have ceased even to be American—they belong to Humanity. King and Peasant, Monarchy and Republic, rich and poor, foreigner and native, North and South, unite in honoring them.

It is a touching tribute to both that their names are so often connected and are fast becoming indissoluble. In the estimation of the competent, as well as in the admiration of the young, it is not Washington *or* Lincoln, but it is Washington *and* Lincoln. There is no occasion for invidious comparison. So different are they, there is no chance for rival interests, for local or other jealousies. So removed are they in time and temperament, so different were their tasks, that they can never be considered as antagonists or rivals. Washington created, Lincoln perpetuated. Washington directed the crude forces of a primitive country, Lincoln directed and controlled the same forces grown turbulent and for a mad space of time defiant and antagonistic.

Proud is the Nation that has produced both a Washington and a Lincoln, so different and yet so near akin. Washington was noble; so was Lincoln, but he was loving too. Washington was just; so was Lincoln, but he added to justice, gentleness. Washington was sagacious; so was Lincoln, and he was also witty. Washington was pre-eminently guided by the head, he was the judgment of his people and his cause; Lincoln, not wanting in judgment, was dominated by the heart; he was the providence of his people, the friend of his foes, and in the light of time his foes have become his appreciative friends and loyal champions.

And still the birthplace of this great American is the picture of desolation and neglect. The humble cabin wherein he was born has been carried away as a curious show; there remain to mark the spot only a crude pole set in the ground and a few flagstones left there by Nature or by chance. Even the famous spring of water is desecrated and neglected, accessible to pigs, cattle and horses. This spring still flows with delicious water, but the pilgrim who drinks from it must drink as I was glad to do without the help of cup or goblet. It still

pours its wealth of water from under the overhanging cliffs, as it did when it attracted Thomas Lincoln, the carpenter, and led him to pre-empt his homestead, to cut the logs and to build the hut into which he brought his bride, Nancy Hanks, and where three children were born to them.

The great trees are gone, but the ride of sixty-four miles from Louisville enables the tourist to judge even yet what the great forest must have been in its pristine glory. The solitary sycamores, the stately elms, the great oaks and the vigilant pines that still remain, suggest the impressive surroundings of the little cabin into which, on the twelfth day of February, 1809, Abraham Lincoln was born. The farm of 110 acres, the title of which is only two or three removes from the land warrant of Thomas Lincoln, is now worse than an abandoned field. The title is in litigation, and the local estimate holds the land well nigh valueless. Fifteen hundred dollars was mentioned as an extravagant price for it. An old house in a state of advanced dilapidation remains on the place and is occupied by an intelligent man of the mountain type, who seems to act as an unauthorized, at least as an unremunerated custodian. A bill was introduced into the Kentucky Legislature a few weeks ago for the purchase by the State of this farm and providing for setting it apart as a memorial park, forever dedicated to the public; but the fate of this bill seemed to be a matter of supreme indifference to the residents of Hodgenville; indeed, its very existence appeared to be unknown to many of them. The attitude of this otherwise thrifty little village seems to be that of indifference, not of ignorance. My driver expressed the public sentiment when he said, "We people here think it mighty common, but folks what come from north of the Ohio river make a great to-do about it, and fuss around cutting sas'fras sticks and the like." Surely, this ought not to be. The intelligence of our own country, our obligation to the future and our respect for the "consensus of the competent" the world over ought to lift this neglected shrine into the dignity and respect that become the birthplace of a great historical character.

This cannot be done by local enthusiasm, nor does it seem to me to be a State problem or obligation. It is a national lesson, a national opportunity which rises into a national obligation. Surely the government that is expending millions of dollars on the historic parks of Arlington, Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge and Vicksburg, could spend a few thousands in preserving this shrine as a pacific memorial to the civilian whose splendor outshines all the epauleted heroes of all our wars.

How is this to be done? First let the Lincoln farm be bought by the Government, then all else

will follow easily. Once the title is secured, a sense of permanence and of adequate maintenance will be assured. Then something like the following should speedily follow:

1. The log cabin, which we believe is now in New York City, should be brought back. In order to better preserve the original logs as long as possible, it should be restored and improved until it will represent such a cabin at its maximum of coziness and attractiveness. In this cabin let there be installed some tidy wholesome mother from the back-woods who will serve visitors at reasonable prices the genuine dishes of the older day, "sure enough" ash-cake, sweet potato pone, beaten biscuits, hominy and rye coffee, smoked ham, samp and succotash and hop-in-john. Let the necessary buildings for attendance, cooking houses, etc., represent the best architectural possibilities of the log-house and the back-woodsman's skill.

2. There might be a concession granted on the other side of the spring for a hotel to give accommodations to transients and boarders. Here again, both the architecture and the menu should preserve the maximum of simplicity consonant with comfort, cleanliness and sanitary requirements. The concession must guard against all extortion and selfish greed.

3. There should be at least one fireproof building of classic severity set apart as an "Old Settler's Museum," one end of which, the "Nancy Hanks Lincoln Section," should contain a full exhibit of the domestic side of the back-woods woman's life; the Dutch oven, the old spinning wheel, the outdoor kettles, the wooden ladles, gourd dippers, samples of rustic manufacture from the home-made knitted socks and mittens up to the wonderfully constructed log cabin and basket patterns of bed-quilts. These might well be offered for sale as mementoes, so long as the manufacture could be preserved in its integrity and the work be really produced by diligent hands of the women who are still to be found by the thousands in the mountain regions and back woods of Kentucky, Tennessee and the Carolinas. Such a market would prove a benignant outlet to many a dear old soul who now lives in obscurity, carrying in her heart the devotedness of Nancy Hanks, the first, and of Sally Bush Johnson, the second mother of Abraham Lincoln. At the other end of this building let there be a "Thomas Lincoln Section," where the contrivances and "contraptions" of the pioneer farm, the barn-yard and the chase should be exhibited—the old flintlock rifle, powder horns, bullet molds and the fishing spear, the axe in all its developments, the ox-yoke and chains, plows and hoes, coonskin caps and buckskin breeches, and all such things as will

help young America to understand the conditions under which their brave fore-elders lived, who, in the paucity of things, attained the riches of the spirit. Let the second story of this building be set apart to a Lincolniana that will grow richer through the generations. The Lincoln literature is already a small library; it is growing at the rate of two or three books a year. Here let the collection be kept sacred and up to date, with pictures, documents, letters, such as would naturally gravitate to such a fitting center.

This memorial building I should like to see contributed by the school children of America—nickel a child, from Florida to Oregon. This would create a great and unique nucleus. Once the scheme is intelligently launched and safely organized, how fast the nickels would come in. Let every child send a nickel and his autograph written on prepared sheets. Let them be systematically arranged and bound by towns, counties and States, and placed in the Lincoln Memorial Room for future reference, where the grandchildren of the present little “tots” will look with pride on the autographs of their fore-elders who helped to build the Lincoln Memorial.

4. Then I would have another building that should be fire-proof, and that, too, should come through nickel offerings. Let it be the love-offering of the African race. Let there be nothing in it except the handiwork of the African. Let it be built and paid for by the hands of colored men. Let it contain as complete an historical museum as they can make it, with models and pictures and books of that which they have produced. Let the story be told from the earliest slave ships, up through all the developments and experiences of slavery to the Emancipation Proclamation and beyond. And the beyond will include such achievements in the arts and sciences as may be reached from time to time by the colored race and be judged worthy a place in this exhibit by a competent board. There are said to be nine million colored people in the United States at the present time. A nickel offering would lay the foundation of a more complete and unique exhibit in this direction than the world has yet seen.

A word as to the general treatment of the farm. It should be all fenced with a good honest rail fence, worm pattern, six rails high, properly blocked, staked and ridged—“such a fence as father used to build.” Such a fence could be made picturesque, for there is the possibility of art in a rail fence as there is in a marble statue.

The farm is divided by a public road. On the spring side it should be brought to as high a stage of park cultivation as possible; lawn treatment with a few sheep, a lot of chickens and one or two old

fashioned little red cows, not the new fashioned Jerseys. The opposite section of the farm, on the other side of the road, should be restored as soon as possible to forest glory. Let all the old trees be planted back, the necessary walks arranged for, and then let Nature do her work, and a hundred years from now there will be a forest indeed, dense and majestic, such as the botanist will delight to visit. Near the entrance on the spring side let the Government put the noblest statue of Abraham Lincoln that art ever produced. Awaiting something better, this might well be a replica of St. Gaudens' noble statue, now situated in Lincoln Park, Chicago, the most worthy representation of the great emancipator yet modeled by sculptor's hand.

Has the time not come? Abraham Lincoln can wait; his fame is sure, but the American children and coming generations cannot afford to lose the passing opportunity. The old settlers are dying, the back woods are nearly all cleared, the type of American life represented by Thomas and Nancy Lincoln is fast passing away. Even the relics of that life are becoming scarce, and that life is too valuable, too full of spiritual potency, too pregnant with divine grace and power to be forgotten and lost. For this reason there is occasion for haste. Let the legislators at Washington cease for awhile their clamorings and their clashings in the interests of parties, sections and the enginery of destruction, and apply themselves to this constructive task, so easily accomplished, so filled with pacific potencies, so benignant a contribution to history.

I write this letter at the capital of the Palmetto State, under the shadow of the State House that carries the scars of Sherman's invasion. The hands that will prepare these notes for the printer have been shadowed for good or for ill by that terrible war from the Southern side, as my life has been furrowed by the same war from the Northern side, but in the name of Lincoln we find common ground. As I travel North and South and touch the heart of life in every section, I find that two names rise inevitably above the conflicting lines and dividing issues into that realm of universal respect which ever belongs to the sincere, the consecrated and the heroic. These two names are Abraham Lincoln and Robert E. Lee. Their pronounciation is ever a proclamation of reconciliation because the qualities just mentioned are reconciling qualities in human nature. The word "reconstruction" has a painful association in this latitude, but a rising tide of enthusiasm in the interest of history and in honor of one of the sages of humanity will do much towards obliterating what is painful and developing what is beautiful in the history of the past for North and for South.

Meanwhile, even as it is, let the pilgrimages to the neglected shrine be multiplied. It is an easy ride from Louisville to Hodgenville, and if parties of sufficient number go together, doubtless the Illinois Central Railway Company will be glad to make it still less wearisome, by giving special Pullman car service, which, until the hotel service at Hodgenville is improved, is necessary to the comfort of the tourist.

JENKIN LLOYD JONES.

*Columbia, S. C., March 14, 1904.*

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## Songs Sung by the Abraham Lincoln Centre Sunday School

### LINCOLN SOLDIERS

Lincoln soldiers were our fathers, in the name of Liberty:  
As Christ died to make men holy, as they died to make men  
free,  
We would live to make men noble, and would dwell in  
unity,  
As we go marching on.

Glory, glory, Hallelujah! Glory, glory, Hallelujah!  
Glory, glory, Hallelujah, as we go marching on!

Lincoln soldiers were our fathers, Lincoln soldiers would  
we be;  
We would live for Right and Justice, as they died for  
Liberty;  
We would rim with white the banner that they flung above  
the free,  
As youth goes marching on.

We would learn today's new duties from each fresh occa-  
sion's plea;  
We would life our weaker brother with our love, where'er  
he be;  
We would hush the mouth of cannon in all lands and on  
the sea,  
As peace goes marching on.

Lincoln soldiers marching onward in the noontide's golden  
glow,  
We would pluck the wayside thistle and would lay its  
proud head low,  
We would plant a flower wherever there is soil for flower  
to grow,  
As love goes marching on.

*Evelyn E. Walker.*

## SONS OF FREEDOM

German Air; No. 27 in "Unity Services and Songs."

An offering to the shrine of power  
Our hands shall never bring;  
A garland on the car of pomp  
Our hands shall never fling;  
Applauding in the conqueror's path  
Our sounding voices ne'er shall be:  
But we have hearts to honor those  
Who bade the world go free.

Praise to the good, the pure, the great  
Who made us what we are,  
Who lit the flame which yet shall glow  
With radiance brighter far!  
Glory to them o'er all the earth,  
And glory in all ages be,  
Who burst the captive's galling chain,  
And bade the world go free!

And one there is whose noble life  
Sets all our hearts aflame,  
Who freedom gave a million souls,  
And saved our country's fame.  
O Lincoln, patient, brave and true,  
God's noblest, rarest type of man,  
With reverent pride we speak thy name,  
The first American!

*Robert Nicoll* (vv 1, 2); *Althea A. Ogden* (v 3).

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## ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Infinite patience and pain,  
Infinite sorrow and wrong,  
Infinite loss become gain,  
Infinite hope to the strong.

Out of the ages he came  
Out of the turbulent years,  
Born of the stress and the strain,  
Harvest of toil and of tears.

For freedom, fetters and gyves,  
For conscience, prison and ban,  
O stern and harsh were the lives,  
And fearful the cost of a man!

Till a woman,—a forest flower,—  
Clasped to her throbbing breast  
The century's sealed dower,  
A man-child for the West.

A man, to rise in his might  
And rend the shackles that bound  
Fair Liberty, crouching in night,  
By her eldest lovers uncrowned.

What shall we do for our dead?  
Build him a temple of fame?  
Carve him of marble a bed,  
Garland with laurel his name?

There are deeds may be paid of men,  
And to some rewards delay,  
But his gift was measured to him again;  
God took him the shining way.

*Evelyn H. Walker.*